

The FJC Monthly

Family Justice Center of Boston

Volume 1, Issue 2

March, 2007

Our On-Site Partners

- Association of Haitian Women (AFAB)
- Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
- Boston Police Department / Family Justice Division
 - Crimes Against Children Unit
 - Domestic Violence (DV) Unit
 - MA Human Trafficking Task Force
- Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Suffolk County

The CAC's On-site Partners:

 - The Child Witness to Violence Project of Boston Medical Center
 - MA Department of Social Services
 - MA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
 - MA Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (PediSANE)
 - The Trauma Center at JRI
- Casa Myrna Vazquez
- Dress for Success Boston
- Finex House / Kim's Project
- Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project
- GLBT DV Attorney Program
- Greater Boston Legal Services
- MA Alliance of Portuguese Speakers
- MA Department of Transitional Assistance DV Unit
- The Network/ La Red
- Suffolk County DA's Office / Family Protection and Sexual Assault Unit
- Victim Rights Law Center

A Child-Centered Environment

Richard Amory / Assistant Development Director

The parents came to the Family Justice Center because they were concerned that their 9-year-old girl had been sexually assaulted. They brought all four of their children, who ranged in age from toddler to teen. The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) conducted a forensic interview with the girl and interviewed one of her brothers as a witness. One of the CAC's Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners performed a specialized medical exam. (See the FJC Partner Profile on page 2 to learn more about PediSANE.)

Although the entire family spent about 5 hours at the FJC that day, the children didn't seem to mind, because they loved the FJC family room. The girl said to her interviewer, "We've been in a lot of waiting rooms, but this is the best one ever!"

The FJC strives to make the many services offered by our partner organizations more accessible to those who need them. We do this for families by providing professional child-care in an expansive waiting area

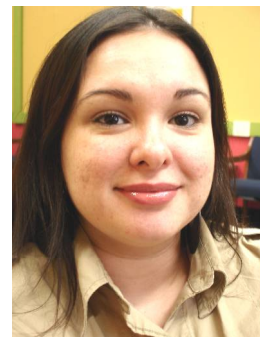
filled with colorful furniture, playful art installations, books, toys and activities for all ages.

In offering a safe, welcoming and child-centered environment, we are able to minimize additional trauma and make the family's time at the FJC as helpful and productive as possible.

Nancy Reyes, the FJC's full-time Child Care Specialist, provides care to all children who are receiving services at the FJC and to those whose parents or other family members are seeking help from one or more of our many on-site partner organizations. Caring for children in this context presents unique challenges. Most challenging of all is the fact that, on average, Nancy has only an hour or two to interact with each child.

Through her five years of work with the Cacique After School Program (a program of Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion, Inc.), Nancy was able to build real relationships with the children and youth she was serving, was able

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Nancy Reyes

FJC Child Care Specialist

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The FJC Will Be What We Make It

Dee Kennedy / Site Operations Director

In 2004, the City of Boston was one of 15 sites around the country to receive money from the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women to set up a Family Justice Center (FJC) to offer multiple services to victims of domestic violence. At that time, there were 3 FJCs operating in the United States: The San Diego Family Justice Center in California, The Julian Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, and The Hennepin County Attorney's Office/Domestic Abuse Service Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Each of the 15 sites that received an FJC grant was asked to meet the needs of their communities' victims and their families. In Boston, Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley led this effort. They established a center to serve victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. As the federal grant comes to a close, it gives us an opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made nation-

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Family Justice Center
of Boston

Open for service
Monday to Friday
9:00 am -5:00 pm

989 Commonwealth
Avenue
Boston MA 02215

617 779-2100

FJC Partner Profile:

Adine Latimore / Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (PediSANE)

To see a child's happy face after they have had an exam and now know that their body is okay, puts a smile on my face.

To provide this service in a setting that is colorful, child focused and much different from an Emergency Department also helps.



Organization: Massachusetts Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program

Name / Position:

Adine Latimore, MSN, APRN, BC, PNP / Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (PediSANE)

Program Mission / Vision:

The Massachusetts Pediatric SANE Program provides compassionate, coordinated, comprehensive and child-centered medical care when a child or family presents with a concern of sexual abuse or assault. Pediatric SANE nurses conduct developmentally appropriate physical exams and time sensitive forensic evidence collection in designated settings. Guided by the overriding principle of "Do no harm", the Pediatric SANE Program minimizes further stress to the child and family by ensuring that Pediatric SANE nurses are responsive to a child's develop-

mental, physical, emotional and cultural needs. Pediatric SANE nurses are trained, certified and credentialed through the MA Dept. of Public Health.

What do you do for the PediSANE Program?

I perform medical evaluations and time sensitive forensic evidence collection for children that present to us with concerns or disclosures of sexual assault. I provide comfort and reassurance to children and families that the child's body is okay, will be okay, will heal, can be treated, and is normal. I will also assist families with crisis intervention, and facilitate appropriate referrals.

Why is the PediSANE Program an on-site partner at the FJC?

In the past and still today, children with sexual assault concerns would go to their Primary Care Provider (PCP) or Emergency Department (ED) for an exam as soon as they made their disclosure. By having Pediatric SANEs on site, a family can come to the Children's Advocacy Center [the CAC, an on-site partner that is wholly located at the FJC] for their forensic interview and have their non-invasive medical exam performed here by specially trained nurse practitioners. This cuts down on the number of visits required of a family at a time when their stress level is

usually increased. The standard of care now is for children to have a forensic medical exam which utilizes a medscope (a video camera which provides magnification). A medscope exam is not available in a PCP's office or very seldom in an ED setting. We routinely use the medscope as a part of our exam at the CAC/FJC.

What motivates you to show up every day?

To know that I am providing a special and necessary service to a child is my biggest motivator. To see a child's happy face after they have had an exam and now know that their body is okay, puts a smile on my face. To provide this service in a setting that is colorful, child focused and much different from an ED also helps.

What are the biggest challenges that PediSANE must overcome to advance its mission?

I think the biggest challenge is that we are new and therefore not well known. We need to continue to educate the lay and medical communities about why all children deserve a forensic medical examination when there are concerns or disclosures of sexual abuse.

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FJC Partner Profile:

Kevin Galipeau / Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project



Organization: Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project (GMDVP)

Name / Position:

Kevin Galipeau, Director of Client Services

Organizational Mission / Vision:

The Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project is a grassroots, non-profit organization providing community education and direct services for clients. GMDVP offers shelter, guidance, and resources to allow gay, bisexual, and transgender men in crisis to remove themselves from violent situations and relationships.

What do you do for GMDVP?:

I provide direct client services to gay, bisexual and transgendered victims of domestic violence. As well as working one-on-one with clients, I also supervise our safe home, the 24-hour

hotline and a state-wide regional advocacy program.

Would you or your organization serve a domestic violence victim who isn't gay, bisexual or transgendered?:

Though GMDVP provides services for primarily GBT survivors, we strongly believe in equal access to services for all survivors; we therefore happily assist any survivor of domestic violence, regardless of gender, sex or sexual orientation. It is not uncommon for GMDVP to provide emotional support, legal advocacy or even safe home services for survivors who are not GBT. Please feel free to refer any survivor to our office or hotline.

What motivates you to show up every day?:

Most of the clients we work with are currently in danger or are trying to put their lives back together and although the services we provide can never be enough, that occasional success story brings me back to work everyday. Whether he is trying to leave an abusive partner, get a restraining order, find shelter or figuring out how to navigate a system that is designed to serve heterosexual women, the smallest things that we can assist with can sometimes make a big difference. Working with a team of 3 other client advocates, GMDVP provided services to over 350 clients last year.

Do you have an FJC success story to share?:

A Spanish-speaking client came into the FJC in desperate need of shelter. He had immigrated to the area, knew no one, spoke little English and quickly became the victim of abuse at the hands of the homophobic people he was forced to live with. Luckily, Verlana Morales [of the FJC reception staff] was able to sit with both of us and translate our conversation and intake into the safe home. Not only did she translate, but she also provided a tremendous amount of emotional support, exactly what he needed at the time. Thanks to having her at the FJC, GMDVP was able to provide emergency services and help him to recover from a horrible experience.

What additional services would you like to see offered at the FJC and why?:

I would love to see the FJC offer computer services to clients. A large barrier to finding employment in an increasingly internet-driven economy is finding a computer that you can use to edit and upload your resume. Most apartment listings are now online as well. Many people can use public libraries to browse the internet, but you cannot download or upload materials that you need to apply for jobs and/or apartments. If the FJC could provide access to one or two computer terminals we could contribute greatly to the needs of our clients.

Though GMDVP provides services for primarily gay, bisexual and transgendered survivors, we strongly believe in equal access to services for all survivors; we therefore happily assist any survivor of domestic violence, regardless of gender, sex or sexual orientation.

A Child-Centered Environment (cont.)

The service Nancy provides allows parents to speak more openly because they can interact privately with team members while knowing that their children are happy and well-taken-care-of.

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to watch them grow and develop, and could see the impact her work had on them.

That impact can be much subtler and harder to see at the FJC. Nancy says, "When they leave, I wonder, 'Were they happy here?'" Nevertheless, she adds, "They always ask their parents, 'Are we gonna come back?'"

Emily River-Núñez conducts the CAC's forensic interviews with younger children. She feels that having a full-time, professional child care provider like Nancy on-site is very important. "I view having Nancy in the waiting room as beneficial for children because it is an environment that is completely separate from the interview," she says. "Children can just play, read or be on the computer. I see Nancy as someone who orients children to the setting and helps them feel comfortable at the CAC before



A child's-eye view of the FJC's Family Waiting Room / Child Care Center.

and after their interview."

Emily explains that the service Nancy provides allows all of the CAC's team members to be present to observe interviews and meet with parents and other family members, rather than having to

supervise the children. It also allows parents to speak more openly because they can interact privately with team members while knowing that their children are happy and well taken-care-of.

FJC Partner Profile:

Adine Latimore / PediSANE Program (cont.)

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How has collaboration with other FJC partners helped you in your work?

It's helpful to know that there are other services here when I am seeing a parent/family. Every organization that I have reached out to has been very helpful. I have utilized the services of the Association of Haitian Women for a parent that needed some assistance. I had a mother in my office last week troubled by many concerns. Ellen Sullivan-Labombarda, a Staff Attorney at the Victim Right's Law Center, was there when I needed legal assistance for that parent. She

gave me resources that would help this mother and child that I was seeing, and as a matter of fact came right over to see this parent in my office. This same parent was having domestic violence issues and was able to see a detective from the Boston Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit while she was here. That detective turned out to be the very same person she had been working with when she had gone to the police station in her district. Sharman Nathanson, the Mental Health Coordinator at the CAC was extremely helpful to this same family. The family was requesting counseling

services for their child and had questions regarding these services that I could not begin to answer. These FJC partners were willing to provide support at a moment's notice, as soon as the words were out of my mouth that I needed help.

What has surprised you most about your partnership at the FJC?

The organizations at the FJC are really family, client and people-centered. There is a shared goal of service to the community. The partnerships found here are exactly what are needed.

The family had questions regarding counseling services that I could not begin to answer. FJC partners were willing to provide support at a moment's notice, as soon as the words were out of my mouth that I needed help.

The FJC Will Be What We Make It (cont.)

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ally and locally and to look at how we can best serve victims, their families and our community at the Family Justice Center of Boston. Our FJC will be what we, the different partner agencies and the community, make it.

The San Diego Family Justice Center technical assistance team reports that there are 25 FJCs now open in the United States and another 5 to 7 operating overseas. Their staff estimates that another 30 to 40 centers are in the planning stages in the U.S. and around the world. It is clear that the concept of co-located services, and coordinating services for victims and their families, is something that appeals to many people in many places. I believe that this service model will work for Boston as well.

Working at Dorchester Municipal Court for 15 years, I saw how many services victims and their families needed. On a daily basis, I saw people who were in crisis, confused, and overwhelmed. Often, they were dealing with multiple government agencies: the Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance, etc. Many had no idea of how to get what they needed from those systems. Most of the time, those agencies were working independently with the victim or family. Those in need of help

were forced to make lots of appointments in different locations. Often, local human service agencies were trying to assist the victim and the family with health care, housing, immediate resources, and support services. This meant more paperwork and more appointments in more places.

The FJC has put police, prosecutors, and service providers for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse in one location. That means that a victim can speak with a prosecutor about a criminal case, meet with an attorney about child support and custody issues, talk to a clinician about mental health counseling for her traumatized child, and talk with an advocate about support services. Our on-site child care makes all of these critical services even more accessible.

It is a start. But, more services providers are needed and welcome. It would be wonderful to have representatives of housing, the school department, WIC, and health care programs available on site for clients as well.

The FJC has unlimited potential for cross training and networking among service providers who work with victims and their families. Partner agencies at the FJC have a wealth of knowledge that should be shared with others. This Center could become the focal point of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse intervention and prevention training for government employees (police officers, prosecutors, probation officers, parole officers, social workers, youth workers, and teachers), as well as

human service providers from health centers, hospitals, daycare centers, community centers, out of school programs, and adult education programs, and residents from grass roots organizing programs committed to reducing and eliminating domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

The FJC has an opportunity to bring more focused attention to the need for violence prevention and intervention services, and increased resources to fund the agencies that provide these services. For community residents, who don't know where to start to look for resources and answers, the FJC can serve as a clearing house for referrals to the many outstanding service providers on site at the FJC and throughout the neighborhoods of Boston.

On-site partner agencies, community partner agencies, and community residents can all help the Family Justice Center of Boston meet the needs of victims, their families, and our community.

The FJC has unlimited potential for cross training and networking among service providers who work with victims and their families. Partner agencies at the FJC have a wealth of knowledge that should be shared with others.

Our FJC will be what we make it.

To find out how you can get involved, and to explore the possibility of partnership with the FJC, please call 617-779-2100 and ask to speak to Dee Kennedy, Site Operations Director.

Our Mission

The Family Justice Center (FJC) of Boston fosters collaboration in service to victims of child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault. We provide a safe and welcoming environment where individuals and families benefit from the availability of services offered by diverse nonprofit and governmental partner organizations. We are committed to complementing and enhancing the health of victim service organizations throughout Boston. As a hub of cooperative activity, the FJC facilitates continuous learning and serves as a resource center for professional development. We strive to coordinate violence intervention and prevention services that are culturally responsive and accessible to all victims.

Our Vision

The Family Justice Center of Boston envisions justice for victims of child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault.

Justice for victims will mean that:

- ◇ Police, prosecutors and service providers collaborate closely and offer coordinated responses which minimize additional trauma and promote the safety, dignity, well-being and rights of all.
 - ◇ Law enforcement and criminal justice practices reflect a deep understanding of the dynamics of child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault.
 - ◇ Useful information about available services and support reaches everyone who needs it.
 - ◇ Governmental and community-based organizations are culturally responsive; provide appropriate, accessible and equitable services to all who need them; and are accountable to the communities that they serve.
 - ◇ There are no gaps in service or “cracks in the system”.
 - ◇ Victims are respected and are never blamed for the violence and abuse.
 - ◇ Child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault are not socially tolerated.
- ⇒ **Rates of child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault are reduced until we are able to stop these crimes entirely.**

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Center of Boston**

**Open for service
Monday to Friday
9:00 am –5:00 pm**

**989 Common-
wealth Avenue
Boston MA 02215**

617 779-2100

Events and Opportunities

Getting to the FJC

The FJC is located near the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Babcock St. in Brighton.

Parking: Metered parking is available. Ask about special parking for victims at the front desk.

By the "T": Take the Green Line "B" train (Boston College) to either the Pleasant Street or the Babcock Street stop (just past BU's Agganis Arena); both are less than one block from the Family Justice Center.

On the MBTA Bus: Take the 66 bus (Dudley Station to Harvard Square) to the corner of Comm. Ave & Harvard Ave. Walk several blocks east (toward downtown Boston) to 989 Comm. Ave.

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Children's Advocacy Center of Suffolk County Seminar Series

One on One Intervention to Prevent Violence

Dr. Peter Stringham, Family Practitioner, Pediatric and Adolescent Department
East Neighborhood Health Center

Children and teenagers are worried about becoming victims of street violence. They are usually fairly open to realistic suggestions that will keep them safe on the streets while not allowing them to look like wimps. This means teaching non violent "self defense." The presentation will look at the thinking that goes into making someone violent or non violent and will offer suggestions to professionals who work with children and teenagers.

Thursday March 8, 2007

9:30 am –11:00 am

Northeastern University

360 Huntington Avenue

Curry Student Center, Rooms 442, 444 & 448

Take the Green Line to Northeastern or the Orange Line to Ruggles
Parking available at the Renaissance Park Garage, 788 Columbus Avenue

For additional information, contact the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC)
617 779-2146 or cac@suf.state.ma.us

Co-sponsored by Center for Community Health, Education, Research and Services (CCHERS)

The CAC Seminar Series is offered free of charge and no pre-registration is required!

Upcoming Seminar Topic:

Juvenile Court and Child Custody Issues

April 12

FJC Staff Directory

To speak with an FJC Partner organization or for general information, please call the main number: (617) 779-2100. Our reception staff, **Ellena Haile** and **Verlana Morales**, will be glad to help you.

For information about the FJC's child care service, please call the main desk and ask to speak with: **Nancy Reyes, Child Care Specialist**

To inquire about potential partnerships, use of the FJC facility and other opportunities for collaboration, please contact: **Dee Kennedy, FJC Site Operations Director** (617) 343-5691

To make a financial or in-kind contribution to the FJC, for inquiries related to outreach, communications or volunteer / internship opportunities, and for general information, please contact: **Richard Amory, Assistant Development Director** (617) 779-2152